August 25, 1956

Dear Ørskovs:

I have had a chance to review my notes, and to clean up some of the doubts about the cultures you types.

WG-52, 53, 54 and 55 are indeed the type strains for O groups 18,20,21 and 25 respectively. They had formerly been received from Kauffmann and found to be fertile with strain K-12. These may therefore be the most useful strains for immediate immunogenetic studies, in the event that fertile strains of 055, O111, etc. are not found. I would therefore urge that you bring with you, as far as possible, test sera for the antigenic components which you know to occur in these strains.* Do they have a classifiable K component? WG4 would also be useful, but already belongs to O-25. Can you type this for K antigen? The other serums that may be important are 055, O111 and 026, and the corresponding B serums (insofar as you can separate them in practice).

With the help of your biochemical diagnoses, I have also been able to clear up the admixture of WG52 in stock of WG53, and WG54 in stock of WG55. These cultures have passed through many people's hands, and I have not closely followed the current stocks. However, we do have some older stocks, as well as lyophil preservations, which correspond correctly to the biochemical diagnoses. In addition, fortunately, the biochemical mutants which were prepared some time ago are uncontaminated and correct in their reactions.

WG57 I do not understand; it was received among a collection from Ewing, and originally labelled 055. There may have been a typographical error.

I agree that it would be most advantageous if you could continue to have necessary serums made at your own laboratory while you are in residence here. We can therefore very well afford to wait until your arrival to plan further what needs to be made.

The only other things I can suggest to you are to accumulate a variety of coli strains that may interest you to be surveyed genetically and for the presence of lysogenic phages. Perhaps the test strains themselves, for the O and the K series (is there a special one for H?) would be the most practical. We have gone through O-1 through O-25, but even these should be repeated as we have much better methods now for detecting crossability. This should make quite a parcel! I would however also suggest a screening of as many 055, O111 etc . strains as possible; the genetic relationship of the O and the B antigen makes for an interesting theoretical as well as practical problem.

I have not heard lately from Dr. Heumann, but he wrote some time ago that he was having difficulties about his fellowship. I do not know the current status of his application; it seems possible he will not be able to come, but I am waiting to hear from him about this.

You have not told me just how long you are planning to stay in the lab here. We are making some plans of our own for next summer; if you plan to do any travelling in the U.S., that would be the most apt time. I assume we can discuss these details more meaningfully when we meet.

With best wishes.